1. Bitcoin: Why Is Bitcoin Valuable?
2. Bitcoin: Introduction to Bitcoin
3. Bitcoin: Is Bitcoin Money?
4. Bitcoin: Is Bitcoin the Future of Money?
5. Bitcoin: Making Payments with Bitcoin
6. Bitcoin: The Future of Bitcoin and the Blockchain
7. Capitalism and Political Economy: Bitcoin, Cryptocurrency, and the Future of Money
8. Bitcoin: The Supply of Bitcoin
9. Bitcoin: How Do You Get Bitcoin?

Bitcoin: Why Is Bitcoin Valuable?
How did bitcoin become valuable? Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College explains how bitcoin became so popular.
https://www.youtube.com/embed/DQBzDim5-48

"Why Is Bitcoin Valuable?" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description
How did bitcoin become valuable? Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College explains how bitcoin became so popular.
Exercise:

Problem: One possible reason bitcoin initially became valuable is that

a. governments supported bitcoin.
b. a small group of people initially agreed to accept bitcoin.
c. bitcoin can be easily changed into other commodities.
d. a very large group of people initially agreed to support bitcoin.

Solution:

b. a small group of people initially agreed to accept bitcoin.

Bitcoin: Introduction to Bitcoin
Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College introduces this course on bitcoin.
https://www.youtube.com/embed/4gmbE9c3QlY

"Bitcoin Introduction" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description
Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College introduces this course on bitcoin.

Bitcoin: Is Bitcoin Money?
Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College discusses whether bitcoin falls under the definition of money.
https://www.youtube.com/embed/ffCYpM-u7C4

"Is Bitcoin Money?" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description
Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College discusses whether bitcoin falls under the definition of money.
Exercise:

Problem:

Bitcoin is a medium of exchange, but whether or not it's called money depends on

a. bitcoin being adopted by the US Federal Reserve.
b. bitcoin being commonly accepted.
c. the value of bitcoin compared to other media of exchange.
d. the value of bitcoin compared to the US dollar.

Solution:

b. bitcoin being commonly accepted.

Bitcoin: Is Bitcoin the Future of Money?
What is it that makes people want to use bitcoin? Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College introduces the next section on the advantages of bitcoin.
https://www.youtube.com/embed/pfoToKvA4FQ

"Is Bitcoin the Future of Money?" by the
Institute for Humane Studies

Description
What is it that makes people want to use bitcoin? Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College introduces the next section on the advantages of bitcoin.

Bitcoin: Making Payments with Bitcoin
If bitcoin is a digital currency, how does one make payments? Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College explains.
https://www.youtube.com/embed/IlWLDE1-Uhs

"Making Payments with Bitcoin" by the
Institute for Humane Studies

Description
If bitcoin is a digital currency, how does one make payments? Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College explains.
Exercise:

Problem:

Although it is a digital currency, bitcoin can be exchanged face-to-face by using

a. smartwatches, which can transfer bitcoin without even using the block chain.
b. special handheld devices that deal only in bitcoin.
c. a specific kind of credit card.
d. smartphones, which can transfer bitcoin through scanning QR codes.

Solution:

d. smartphones, which can transfer bitcoin through scanning QR codes.

Bitcoin: The Future of Bitcoin and the Blockchain
Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College discusses whether he thinks bitcoin or block chain technology will find widespread use in the future.
https://www.youtube.com/embed/rCA6pgsdRVY

"The Future of Bitcoin and the Blockchain"
by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description
Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College discusses whether he thinks bitcoin or blockchain technology will find widespread use in the future.

Discussion Question

Dr. Luther is skeptical bitcoin will be widely adopted, but he does believe that blockchain technology will gain widespread use. What do you think? Do you think that bitcoin is superior to other currencies? Why or why not?

Capitalism and Political Economy: Bitcoin, Cryptocurrency, and the Future of Money
In this lecture, Professor Michael Munger of Duke University discusses rise of cryptocurrencies and their importance in the global economy.

Lecture

https://www.youtube.com/embed/eTGSC42lfmQ

"Bitcoin" reproduced with permission from instructor Professor Michael Munger and producer Shaun King

Watch on YouTube
https://youtu.be/eTGSC42lfmQ

Lecture Overview

1. Venezuela as an example: a "shortage" of money?
2. Bitcoin: Is a global crypto-currency, has been around since January of 2009. It is not issued by any entity, but rather is peer-to-peer / decentralized. It trades over the internet, or “feature phones.” The protocol is open source. The participants are owners, buyers, and "miners," or people who transmit and check transactions.
3. The maximum number of Bitcoins will be about 21 million. A bitcoin is a unit of measurement, but the “unit” depends on solely on how people value it in transactions. No physical existence.
4. Five essential steps in a Bitcoin transaction: (1) owner of Bitcoins signs in, using public key (or Bitcoin Address) a bit like username) and a private key (a bit like password). (2) owner of Bitcoins sends X Bitcoins (highly divisible) to another Bitcoin Address. (3) This information is then broadcast by the software on the sender’s phone or PC, and received by all the (active) nodes in the network (4) All the

active nodes add the (pending) transaction to the relevant (current) block. A block is like a ledger entry, divided into 10 minute intervals. All the transactions in one 10 minute interval are in the same block (blocks are disjoint: 10:10 to 10:20, 10:20 to 10:30, and so on…) (5) The block is run through a hash function by miners. This is a unique set of characters that contain all the information in the entire block, though knowing the hash won't let you reproduce the block. Blocks are linked to previous blocks, creating a blockchain. The value of every account is evident on the blockchain.

Readings

- The History of Bitcoin
- Vigna, P., and M.J. Casey, *The Age of Cryptocurrency*

Additional Resources

Podcasts

- Gavin Andresen on BitCoin and Virtual Currency
- Gavin Andresen on the Present and Future of Bitcoin

Bitcoin: The Supply of Bitcoin
Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College discusses how the supply of bitcoin is stabilized.
https://www.youtube.com/embed/50iDE2dbm-c

"The Supply of Bitcoin" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description
Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College discusses how the supply of bitcoin is stabilized.
Exercise:

Problem: Bitcoin resembles a commodity money in that

a. the supply is not governed by an automatic mechanism.
b. the demand is governed by an automatic mechanism.
c. a central bank can help change the supply of bitcoin.
d. the supply is governed by an automatic mechanism.

Solution:

d. the supply is governed by an automatic mechanism.

Bitcoin: How Do You Get Bitcoin?
Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College describes the three different ways to get bitcoin.
https://www.youtube.com/embed/hyfk-HyMkvk

"How Do You Get Bitcoin?" by the
Institute for Humane Studies

Description
Dr. William Luther of Kenyon College describes the three different ways to get bitcoin.
Exercise:

Problem: The following are ways to obtain bitcoin EXCEPT for

a. exchanging local currency.
b. accepting bitcoin for goods or services.
c. joining the Bitcoin server.
d. mining bitcoin.

Solution:

c. joining the Bitcoin server.